

IN THE CLAIMS:

1 1. (Currently Amended) A method of managing a computer information database that
2 contains computer profile data for computers, the method including the steps of:

3 A. determining a multiple node tree structure of groups for the computers, in which
4 each node is a group level and a top level is a root, based on primary grouping criteria and
5 secondary grouping criteria that correspond to selected computer profile data;

6 B. including, in a group mapping table, one or more fields for the primary grouping
7 criteria and one or more fields for the secondary grouping criteria, and including in those
8 fields, in respective table records, values corresponding to the selected computer profile data
9 that are utilized in the primary grouping criteria and the secondary grouping criteria with the
10 values associated with either or both of the primary grouping criteria and the secondary
11 grouping criteria being ranges that extend between selected high and low values and wherein
12 certain specific values for said primary grouping criteria and said secondary grouping criteria
13 together uniquely identify one or more particular computers;

14 C. further including, in the respective table records, information that identifies the
15 groups to which the computers that satisfy the primary and secondary criteria are assigned;

16 D. receiving, for inclusion in the database, computer profile data from a plurality of
17 computers;

18 E. for the profile data from a given computer

19 extracting the selected profile data that are utilized in the primary groupings
20 and the secondary groupings,

21 querying the group mapping table to determine if the extracted profile data
22 correspond to or fall within the ranges of the respective values that are included in the
23 primary grouping fields and the secondary grouping fields in any of the records in the table,
24 and

25 if the query results in no records, assigning the computer to a default group,

26 if the query results in one table record, assigning the computer to the group
27 that is named in the record,

if the query results in multiple table records that include secondary low values, assigning the computer to the group that is named in the record that is in a first predetermined position in the order in which the records are returned, or

if the query results in multiple records and there are no corresponding secondary low values in the records, assigning the computer to the group that is named in the record that is in a second predetermined position in the order in which the records are returned; and

F. manipulating the computer profile data from the database and producing, for a selected group level, reports that contain summaries of certain or all of the attributes of the computers that are in the selected group level or below in the tree.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein one or more table records includes secondary grouping values set to NULL.

3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the respective values associated with the primary grouping criteria are ranges and the step of determining if the extracted data correspond to the respective values further includes determining if the corresponding extracted data falls within one of the primary grouping ranges.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 3 wherein the values associated with the secondary grouping criteria are ranges and the step of determining if the extracted data correspond to the values further includes determining if the corresponding extracted data of interest falls within one of the secondary grouping ranges.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of querying further includes determining if the extracted data corresponds to the primary grouping criteria and a secondary low value of **NULL** or the empty string.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the primary and secondary grouping criteria correspond to user-specified values of the selected computer profile data.

1 7. (Previously Presented) A method of managing a computer information database that
2 contains computer profile data for computers, the method including the steps of:

3 A. determining a multiple node tree structure of groups for the computers, in which
4 each node is a group level and a top level is a root, based on primary grouping criteria that
5 correspond to ranges of values of selected computer profile data;

6 B. including, in a group mapping table, fields for the ranges of values of the selected
7 computer profile data that are the primary grouping criteria, and including in those fields, in
8 respective table records, high and low values for the ranges of the selected computer profile
9 data wherein certain specific values for said primary grouping criteria and said secondary
10 grouping criteria together uniquely identify one or more particular computers;

11 C. further including, in the table records, information that identifies the groups to
12 which the computers that satisfy the primary grouping criteria are assigned;

13 D. receiving, for inclusion in the database, computer profile data from a plurality of
14 computers;

15 E. for the profile data from a given computer

16 extracting the selected profile data that is utilized in the primary grouping,

17 querying the group mapping table to determine if the extracted data fall within the
18 ranges of values that are included in the primary grouping fields in any of the table records,
19 and

20 if the query results in no records, assigning the computer to a default group,

21 if the query results in one table record, assigning the computer to the group that is
22 named in the record, or

23 if the query results in multiple table records assigning the computer to the group that
24 is named in the record that is in a first predetermined position in the order in which the
25 records are returned; and

26 F. manipulating the computer profile data from the database and producing, for a
27 selected group level, reports that summarize the attributes of the computers that are in the
28 selected group level or below in the tree.

1 8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7 further including the steps of
2 including, in the table, fields that correspond to a range of values for computer profile
3 data that are selected as secondary grouping criteria to assign the computers to groups for
4 profile data reporting, and including in the fields in respective table records high and low
5 values for the secondary grouping computer profile data of interest, and
6 for the profile data from a given computer
7 further extracting data that correspond to the computer profile data selected
8 for the secondary grouping criteria,
9 further querying the table to determine if the further extracted data fall within
10 the secondary grouping criteria ranges included in the table records, and
11 if the query results in one table record, assigning the computer to the group
12 that is named in the record,
13 if the query results in multiple table records that include secondary low values,
14 assigning the computer to the group that is named in the record that is in a second
15 predetermined position in the order in which the records are returned,
16 if the query results in no records, assigning the computer to a default group, or
17 if the query results in multiple records and there are no corresponding secondary low
18 values in the records, assigning the computer to the group that is named in the record that is
19 in a third predetermined position in the order in which the records are returned.

1 9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8 wherein the step of querying further
2 includes determining if the extracted data corresponds to the primary grouping criteria and a
3 secondary low value of NULL or the empty string.

1 10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the first predetermined position in
2 the order of the records is the first record found and the second predetermined position in the
3 order of records is the last record found.

1 11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8 wherein the second predetermined position
2 in the order of the records is the first record found and the third predetermined position in the
3 order of records is the last record found.

1 12. (Currently Amended) A method for managing a database that contains computer profile
2 data for a plurality of computers, the method including the steps of

3 grouping the plurality of computers in groups that are nodes of a multiple node tree in
4 which each node is a group level and a top level is a root in accordance with user-specified
5 primary grouping criteria and secondary grouping criteria that correspond to respective
6 values of selected computer profile data and the selected values of one or both of the primary
7 grouping criteria and the secondary grouping criteria are ranges between selected high and
8 low values and wherein certain specific values for said primary grouping criteria and said
9 secondary grouping criteria together uniquely identify one or more particular computers;

10 manipulating the database computer profile data and producing, for one or more
11 selected group levels, profile reports that contain summaries of certain or all of the attributes
12 of the computers that are included in a given group level or below in the tree.

1 13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12 wherein the step of grouping further
2 includes re-grouping the plurality of computers in groups in accordance with different user-
3 specified primary and secondary grouping criteria.

1 14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12 wherein the step of grouping further
2 includes grouping the plurality of computers in groups in accordance with primary and
3 secondary grouping criteria that correspond to computer profile data that represents selected
4 physical locations of users.

1 15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14 wherein the further step of grouping
2 includes re-grouping the plurality of computers in groups in accordance with primary and

3 secondary grouping criteria that correspond to computer profile data that represents selected
4 structures within the underlying organization of users.

1 16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12 wherein the step of grouping further
2 includes grouping computers in accordance with user-specified primary and secondary
3 criteria that utilize ranges of values for the selected computer profile data.

1 17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16 wherein the step of grouping further
2 includes re-grouping the plurality of computers in groups in accordance with different
3 user-specified ranges of values of the selected computer profile data.

1 18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16 wherein the respective ranges of
2 values correspond to a selected structure within the underlying organization of users.

1 19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18 wherein the further step of grouping
2 includes re-grouping the plurality of computers in groups in accordance with primary and
3 secondary grouping criteria that correspond to other selected structures within the
4 underlying organization of users.

1 20. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium configured as a database
2 management system for producing reports of attributes of collections of computers using
3 computer profile data contained in a database, the system including:

4 A. collecting means for collecting profile data for a given computer into the
5 database which is retained in computer storage media;

6 B. a profile group manager running on an associated computer for

7 grouping the computers into a specified tree-structure of groups in which
8 each node of the tree is a group level and a top level is a root, based on primary and
9 secondary grouping criteria that correspond to respective values of selected computer
10 profile data with the values associated with either or both of the primary grouping criteria
11 and the secondary grouping criteria being ranges that extend between selected high and
12 low values, and wherein certain specific values for said primary grouping criteria and
13 said secondary grouping criteria together uniquely identify one or more particular
14 computers,

15 the profile group manager maintaining the group information in computer storage
16 media,

17 manipulating the data in the database to produce reports that summarize the
18 attributes of the computers in a given group level and the levels below on the tree, and
19 providing the reports to a user.

1 21. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium ~~database management~~
2 ~~system~~ of claim 20 wherein the profile group manager

3 adds a group mapping table to the database, the group mapping table including a
4 primary grouping criteria field, a secondary grouping criteria field and a group
5 identification field with the respective table records containing primary grouping criteria
6 and secondary grouping criteria and corresponding group information; and

7 includes a given computer in a group by (i) extracting from the profile data the
8 data that corresponds to the primary grouping criteria and the secondary grouping
9 criteria, (ii) querying the group mapping table for records that match the extracted data,
10 and (iii) assigning a computer to a group that is specified by the group identification field
11 in a record that is determined to match the query.